

INSPECTION REPORT

QUEENSBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

London

LEA area: Hackney

Unique reference number: 100235

Acting Headteacher: Mr V Bhanaut

Lead inspector: Ms R Frith

Dates of inspection: 28 February – 3 March 2005

Inspection number: 271061

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	168
School address:	Queensbridge Road London
Postcode:	E8 4ET
Telephone number:	020 7254 1186
Fax number:	020 7249 4666
Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Ms L Altass
Date of previous inspection:	10 May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Queensbridge is a smaller than average size community primary school. Following a consultation exercise, the local education authority decided to expand Queensbridge infant school into a one form entry primary, growing year-on-year from September 2003, so at the time of this inspection, the oldest children were in Year 4. The school only gained additional accommodation in 2004 and extensive remodelling work, due to start in July 2004, has been deferred until July 2005. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds but overall, the socio-economic status of families is well below average and a well above average percentage of pupils receives free school meals. When children join the school, they have a wide range of experiences and abilities but overall, their attainment is well below that usually seen for children of this age. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average and one pupil has a statement of special educational need because they need considerable help with their learning. Those receiving additional support mainly have social, emotional, behavioural, speech, communication or moderate learning difficulties. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and there are a rising number of pupils who have English as an additional language. Currently, they represent 44 per cent of the school population and 60 pupils are at the early stages of English language acquisition. Pupil mobility is high and only 70 per cent of the current Year 4 have had all their education in Queensbridge. Teacher mobility is very high. After a long period of stability, in the Autumn Term 2004, the school faced considerable challenges relating to staffing and building works. Nearly all teaching staff are new to the school. Five out of six class teachers are temporary or supply teachers and the sixth is a newly qualified teacher. The substantive headteacher is currently on long-term sick leave and an acting headteacher started in the school in November 2004. In response to these changes, The Learning Trust has set up a programme of support with a focus on ensuring continuity of teaching and learning, clear strategic direction, and stability of permanent staff. The school received Investors in People in 2000 and the Schools Achievement Award in 1999 and 2002. The school is involved in the following initiatives: Single Regeneration Budget, Sure Start and the LEA Innovation Fund. It is also involved in a small school federation.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2490	Ruth Frith	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Foundation Stage Science Music
9519	Sue Pritchard	Lay inspector	
21103	Val Ives	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Design and technology Religious education
31029	Peter Thrussell	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school which is rapidly improving and has many good features. Though achievement overall is only satisfactory because of past difficulties with staffing and provision, recent steps taken by managers have ensured that teaching and learning are now good and standards are beginning to rise. Staff create a happy and supportive environment where all pupils become confident and enjoy learning. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Recent developments in the way the school is led and managed, together with support from the Hackney Learning Trust, are bringing improvements.
- The frequent changes in staffing have caused some instability in the pupils' learning and the management of the curriculum.
- Recent improvements in the quality of teaching, together with effective support from teaching assistants, are helping to improve pupils' learning but standards remain well below average in speaking and writing for pupils in Year 4. Standards are well below average in information and communication technology for pupils in Year 2 and Year 4.
- The assessment of pupils' work is inconsistent.
- Pupils' personal qualities are developed well and this leads to good attitudes and relationships.
- Pupils behave well because they are interested in what they do and are encouraged to succeed.
- The school is very good at making sure that pupils with differing needs and from different backgrounds are helped to achieve in a supportive and encouraging learning environment.
- The late finish to the school day affects the quality of pupils' learning because some are tired and find it difficult to concentrate.
- Pupils are well cared for and the school is a safe place in which to learn.
- Staff have developed good links with parents and the community.

Generally, the school has shown satisfactory improvement since the last inspection but over the last couple of months improvement has been good. Staff have addressed the issues identified in the last inspection report and this is helping to improve pupils' achievement. The school has a clear plan for action with a focus on improving provision and raising standards, taking into account the present situation of temporary staffing.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	C	D	E	B
writing	A	E	E	C
mathematics	D	E	E	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Achievement is satisfactory throughout the school, but as a result of improvements in teaching and learning many pupils are beginning to achieve well and standards are now rising. Many children have low standards when they first start school. Because of this, most are not likely to reach the goals they are expected to by the end of reception despite the good quality teaching they receive. Pupils currently in Year 2 are working at average levels in listening and religious education and below average levels in speaking, reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils in Year 4 are currently working at average levels in listening and religious education and below average levels in reading, mathematics and science. Their standards are well below average in speaking and writing and above average in physical education. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 are working at well

below average levels in information and communication technology because facilities and resources have been inadequate until recently.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. Consequently, they behave well and standards of behaviour overall have significantly improved. Pupils' attendance has also improved and is now satisfactory. However, some pupils still regularly arrive late.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school and the quality of teaching are good. This is mainly due to the renewed focus on raising standards through good teaching and learning and the very good induction of new staff. Key features of the good teaching are the high expectations of staff as this creates a good climate for learning, the encouragement given to pupils to do their best, and the effectiveness of the teachers' lesson planning. Learning is good because of the quality of teaching, the good support of teaching assistants, the use of specialist staff, and improvements in behaviour and attendance. The way teachers assess pupils' learning, although satisfactory in some areas, does not always ensure that teachers have a clear understanding of the next steps in pupils' learning.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall with strengths in the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Recent, rapid improvements have brought the accommodation up to a satisfactory standard and resources are also satisfactory. Staff ensure that pupils are all included, well cared for and feel supported. Their views are valued and their ideas acting upon. Staff have good links with parents and the community and satisfactory links with other schools and colleges.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good and governance of the school is satisfactory. The leadership of the acting headteacher, together with support from the Hackney Learning Trust, is very good and a key feature in the school's renewed drive for improvement. He has been particularly successful in developing a team of professionals with a shared vision and desire to improve provision. The leadership of other senior managers is good overall with particular strengths in the work of the deputy headteacher and the Foundation Stage co-ordinator. The new chair of governors is very experienced and has a clear understanding of her role and the development of the school. Recently, the work of the governing body has developed significantly but governors have failed to meet statutory requirements by reporting to parents annually.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents have positive views about the school but show concern over the recent frequent changes in staffing which have brought about some instability in their children's learning. However, they believe that teaching is good and their children make good progress. Most pupils like school, the range of activities and recent improvements, such as those to the playground. They think there is always someone to turn to and teachers always listen to them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Appoint permanent teaching staff, including some with the necessary experience and abilities to take on additional management responsibilities.
- Maintain the good teaching and improve assessment to ensure consistency across the school.
- Raise standards in speaking, writing and information and communication technology.
- Urgently review the times of the school day taking into account the need to encourage parents to bring their children to school on time and ensure their good attendance.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the governors' report to parents is sent out annually and contains all the required information.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Over time, pupils have achieved satisfactorily, but due to a more settled learning environment, in some of the lessons seen they achieved well. Children in the Foundation Stage are currently working at levels below those expected nationally for their age. In Year 2 and Year 4, pupils are working at broadly below average levels.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are beginning to rise due to recent changes in school.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and consequently make good progress towards the targets set for them.
- Pupils in Year 4 are working at well below average levels in speaking and writing.
- Pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 are working at well below average levels in information and communication technology.

Commentary

1. On entry to school, children display a wide range of attainment and have had a variety of experiences but overall, their attainment is well below that seen for children of the same age nationally. For many children, communication, language, literacy, personal and social development are the weaker areas. Each year a few pupils join the school speaking little or no English or have special educational needs and this also affects the overall standards on entry. Due to quite significant recent developments in the nursery and reception, children are beginning to receive a better curriculum and in some sessions achieve well. Staff focus on developing their personal and social skills and on developing their speech and range of vocabulary. However, over time, achievement has only been satisfactory. Consequently, by the time they enter Year 1, many children are not expected to reach the levels expected nationally for pupils of that age in some areas of learning, particularly in relation to their reading, writing and number work.
2. Attainment in the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 2 was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared with pupils in all schools. These results show a decline in reading standards compared to the previous year, even though the percentage of pupils gaining a level higher than that expected for their age was in line with that seen nationally. This indicates that more capable pupils were being appropriately challenged. Similarly, standards in science were well below average for the percentage of pupils gaining the level expected for their age but average for those attaining the higher level. When compared with schools who have a similar number of pupils receiving free school meals, pupils attained above average standards in reading and average standards in writing and mathematics. These results continue a rate of improvement which over the last five years has been below the national trend.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.6 (14.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.4 (12.3)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.8 (14.9)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Several factors are instrumental in helping pupils to succeed. Some of these have only been evident in recent months so have had no bearing yet on overall standards. The school's good ethos is effective in helping pupils to gain confidence and develop their ability to tackle new tasks and this was evident, particularly with the older pupils. Pupils' behaviour has improved overall so less time is lost settling pupils to work. Much of the teaching was good and this had a direct influence on the rate of pupils' learning. Also, pupils' attendance has improved. Factors which continue to affect pupils' achievement and the standards attained are poor punctuality and the late end to the school day. The latter affects pupils' concentration, particularly the younger children who become tired and sometimes restless.
4. Evidence from this inspection indicates that pupils currently in Year 2 are working at average levels in listening and religious education, and below average levels in speaking, reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils in Year 4 are currently working at average levels in listening and religious education and below average levels in reading, mathematics and science. Their standards are well below average in speaking and writing and above average in physical education. Until recently, facilities and resources for information and communication technology have been unsatisfactory and this has affected pupils' achievement over time. Consequently, pupils in both Year 2 and Year 4 are working at well below average levels.
5. No significant difference was noted in the achievement between boys and girls during the inspection although there have been some differences in the Year 2 national test results. For example, over the last three years, girls did better than boys in reading and writing and boys did better than girls in mathematics.
6. More capable pupils are generally appropriately challenged, as can be seen from the test results showing comparisons with similar schools. The percentage of pupils gaining a Level 3 (a level higher than that expected for Year 2 pupils) was well above average in reading, mathematics and science and above average in writing. The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection in its provision for those pupils who are gifted and talented and currently their needs are met satisfactorily. Appropriate work is set in lessons and further challenge provided through clubs and additional activities.
7. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make progress similar to their peers when taking account of their prior knowledge. They make good progress towards the targets identified for them in their individual education plans. This is the result of the good support both from the co-ordinator and class teachers and from the teaching assistants.
8. From the information provided by the school and through observation and discussion with pupils, no significant underachievement of pupils from specific minority ethnic groups was evident. Because of the school's very good focus on inclusion, all pupils have access to an appropriate curriculum which meets their needs and helps them to achieve at least satisfactorily. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are generally well supported in school so that they achieve in line with their peers. There does, however, seem to be a higher percentage of low fluency pupils when compared with the Hackney averages and the results of the Turkish speakers are also below the Hackney average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and are well behaved. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Attendance is satisfactory overall, but a significant minority of pupils arrive at school late.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school sets high expectations for pupils' behaviour and staff work hard to gain positive responses.
- Relationships are good and underpin the happy and inclusive nature of the school.
- Pupils have good opportunities to experience success and to develop their self-esteem.
- Attendance is greatly improved but punctuality is unsatisfactory.
- Promoting and maintaining good attendance is seen as a shared responsibility.

Commentary

9. Pupils like the staff and enjoy school. New teachers have been particularly effective in developing good relationships with pupils, some of whom have been taught by several different teachers over a short period of time and have found this unsettling. Due to the high expectations of staff and their consistent approach to managing and encouraging pupils, behaviour has recently improved. Children in the nursery and reception classes are currently responding satisfactorily to the new staff and procedures. Overall their attitudes and behaviour are sound. Nursery staff adopt a patient, calm manner, and this is effective in settling children into school and encouraging good relationships. In the reception class, staff use a variety of good strategies to ensure children settle to their work and effectively manage the few children who find it difficult to behave well all the time. Staff who teach older pupils use a variety of awards and sanctions to support good behaviour and insist on mature and sensible attitudes. As a result, pupils' natural exuberance does not very often become boisterous. Staff are successful in supporting pupils with special educational needs who have behavioural difficulties. There were three fixed period exclusions in the school year prior to the inspection. These reflect the school's firm but fair approach to unacceptable behaviour.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	16	0	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	2	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	13	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	52	1	0
Black or Black British – African	32	0	0
Chinese	4	0	0
Any other ethnic group	32	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	11	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

10. The school lays great importance on giving pupils the chance to develop as individuals and is extending the range of this work well. The role models given by staff help pupils to know right from wrong and to function as members of a community. In addition, the school offers pupils opportunities to discover their talents and interests, and to recognise their own uniqueness. For example, they can do this through sport and music. In an assembly, pupils grew in confidence as they showed the rest of the school how they had particular talents, such as playing the guitar or playing African drums. Their efforts were applauded enthusiastically. After a physical education session with football coaches, others felt they had been successful and made very good progress in developing their skills. Also, in one lesson, pupils were encouraged to think about the number and range of different languages spoken in the school and to celebrate their heritage. This was confirmed later during lunch when several multilingual and bilingual pupils talked proudly about their cultural backgrounds and the different things that make them who they are. There is a deliberate emphasis on highlighting the achievement of individuals, which is evident in the displays around the school, and also comes through in lessons and other activities. This is confirmed weekly through a Celebration Assembly when pupils and staff receive recognition of their work by receiving certificates.
11. Relationships are good. Boys and girls get on well together, and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds mix happily. Pupils of all ages respond well to adults. This positive picture has been created because the school has set clear boundaries and the acting headteacher is conspicuous throughout the school day. He has a clear vision for how he would like to see the school develop and sets good examples through his actions and comments to staff and pupils. Several older pupils are responding very well to the additional responsibilities he has placed upon them, such as helping to support younger children during lunchtime and awarding stickers for good behaviour during assemblies.
12. Through a co-ordinated effort of pupils, parents, staff and governors, pupils' attendance has improved dramatically to what is now a satisfactory level. Last term, over 95 per cent of pupils were in school every day. This externally audited figure is a vast improvement on the attendance last year which was very low in comparison with other schools. However, pupils' punctuality is unsatisfactory. The governors are considering whether altering the times of the school day will help more parents get their children to school on time. In the meantime, a governor comes into school daily to monitor the registers and note any irregularities. Staff are then quickly alerted to pupils who are absent for no good reason. Pupils want to be in school and are eager to get there, even more so when they see the headteacher waiting for them at the school gate.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	8.1	School data	0.3
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. The curriculum is satisfactory with good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Pupils are well cared for and support, advice and guidance are satisfactory. Staff seek, value and act on the pupils' views well. Links with parents and the community are good and links with other schools and colleges are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is currently good but has been affected by changes in staffing over recent months. Assessment is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good use of specialist teachers and tutors is helping to raise the overall quality of teaching.
- Teaching assistants support the pupils well and help them to make good progress, particularly those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
- Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and engage them in their learning well.
- There are inconsistencies in the way teachers assess pupils' work.

Commentary

13. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, together with the Learning Trust have worked hard to raise the quality of teaching and learning during this unsettled time and bring about consistency. The chart below gives an outline of the quality of lessons seen during the inspection and reflects the emphasis placed on these areas. Managers have recognised the need to compensate for any interruptions to learning caused by changes in staff and have adopted a range of successful strategies to ensure that all feel supported, thereby bringing stability to the school.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	5 (14%)	17 (46%)	13 (35%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

14. The generous additional support has been instrumental in maintaining at least satisfactory progress during this difficult time of change. However, this well distributed support has not been in place long enough to have improved pupils' overall achievement and the standards they attain. Care has been taken to ensure that all staff have the necessary skills and also support the acting headteacher's vision for school improvement. The current staff team are working very well to establish a strong ethos for learning and this is having a positive effect on how pupils learn. Expectations are generally high, with staff taking time to engage the interest of their pupils and encouraging them to succeed. This is helping to raise the standard of behaviour across the school.
15. Specialist staff use their expertise well either by using their knowledge to improve the curriculum and the quality of planning in individual lessons or by acting as good role models. Here, they demonstrate good practice through teaching whole sessions or team teaching with the class teacher. This was seen in science, where Year 4 pupils achieved well in their understanding of forces, in Years 1, 3 and 4 where pupils developed their physical education skills and thoroughly enjoyed the activities, in Year 1 where their information and communication skills were enhanced through challenging work and in Year 4 where pupils developed their ability to plan rhythmic patterns.
16. Teachers' lesson plans are good. They indicate how pupils' needs are to be met and how learning is to be developed in a systematic way. However, there is recognition in the school that some of the long and medium-term planning is cumbersome and repetitive and needs to be streamlined. Inspectors agree with this. Overall, assessment of pupils' work and progress is satisfactory but there is little done in subjects other than English, mathematics and science which helps teachers to plan the next stages in learning and the setting of targets. Also, because of the frequent changes in staff, the marking of pupils' work is not consistent so some pupils do not clearly understand how they can improve. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own work.

17. Staff have developed good relationships with pupils and this helps them to successfully manage the pupils in their care and promote good behaviour. New teachers have quickly gained the confidence of pupils, and support staff, many of whom have been in school for longer periods, have provided a 'familiar face' during a period of change. The expertise of support staff is generally used well, thereby helping to raise the quality of teaching overall. They are effective when encouraging pupils to concentrate and work hard and when developing their thinking and use of skills through careful questioning.
18. Pupils who speak English as an additional language progress in line with their peers and currently have their needs met well. Teachers and support staff are effective in ensuring their good participation in lessons by encouraging them to ask and answer questions and by explaining unfamiliar vocabulary. Those at the early stages of learning English are encouraged to 'have a go' and quickly develop their ability to speak English. Bilingual learners are usually confident in class and keen to participate. Staff are sensitive to the needs of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and those from a range of different faiths and backgrounds. The diversity within the school is greatly valued. All are well supported, so that they are included in class activities and progress at a similar rate to their peers, in line with their capabilities.
19. The school has recently improved its work with pupils who are gifted and talented and this is generally effective. A register of pupils' skills and capabilities helps teachers to ensure that their teaching is sufficiently challenging, and creative and physical skills are developed through additional clubs and specialist teaching. Teachers are also aware of differences that may occur in the responses and learning of girls and boys and therefore use a variety of methods to ensure that all are included and interested. Positive role models provided for black boys are helping to improve their behaviour and learning.
20. A secure learning environment is achieved and good relationships are established which enable pupils with special educational needs to become confident and want to improve. Class teachers and teaching assistants are well aware of individual needs and pupils who require additional support are identified early. Teaching assistants are well deployed and have a considerable influence in guiding the learning of these pupils.

The curriculum

The breadth of the curriculum is satisfactory. It is very inclusive, meets statutory requirements and provides effective personal, social and health education. Opportunities for enrichment are satisfactory overall but developing well. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides good support for learning outside the school day.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is good.
- Support staff make a significant contribution.
- Delays in building works have adversely affected the ICT curriculum and the outdoor provision for the reception class.
- There is an urgent need to appoint permanent staff to ensure the secure future of the school.

Commentary

21. There has been rapid improvement in curriculum development over the past couple of months since the new acting headteacher was appointed. All subjects and curricular areas have been audited to establish and identify the resource needs, support and future development in each of them. Good transitional action plans have been written for all subjects.

22. The school has successfully remedied the imbalance identified on the timetables, for example, to include music and physical education. All subject policies and schemes of work are in place to effectively guide and support teachers' planning. The provision for personal, social and health education is good and is effectively planned for each year group. Homework and breakfast clubs, together with an African dance and drums club are some of the good activities offered by the school. A daily assembly and act of collective worship take place and these are thoughtfully prepared. They have a strong impact on the pupils' behaviour and positive attitudes to each other and adults in the school.
23. Promotion of equality of opportunity is good. There is good support for the pupils within the classrooms. The school takes account of the needs of all the pupils and effectively supports them, for example, for English as an additional language, for special needs, for behaviour and attendance. The provision for pupils with special educational needs remains good as at the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. Class teachers and learning support assistants are well aware of individual needs, and pupils who need additional support are identified early. The pupils' individual education plans are thoughtfully written; the targets are specific and measurable and progress is carefully monitored.
24. There has been a great deal of disruption to the pupils' education through the very high turnover of staff within the last 12 months. Nevertheless, the school has appointed sufficient staff to teach the National Curriculum. However, these staff are either temporary or supply teachers and there is an urgent need for permanent staff to be appointed to ensure stability and consistency and to enable the school to continue to improve.
25. The accommodation is satisfactory. Plans to provide an ICT suite and to improve the staffroom and the outdoor play area for the reception class have been held up by delays in building work. Outside, there are adequate hard play areas, marked out for football and some creative games, together with a small quiet area with benches and flowers. Currently there is no access to the building for pupils with severe mobility problems but this is planned for. Resources to support teaching have recently been improved. The library contains an appropriate range of fiction and non-fiction books.

Care, guidance and support

The arrangements for the care and welfare of pupils are good. Very good attention is paid to health and safety requirements. Pupils receive good support for their personal needs and satisfactory guidance on their academic progress. Good account is taken of pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are always listened to; they have trust and affection for the adults in school.
- The afternoon is too long for many pupils to cope with.
- Staff work very hard to make the old school building a safe and welcoming place.
- Pupils are guided well in their personal conduct but not so well in their work.

Commentary

26. The pupils' day gets off to a good start with the friendly welcome they receive on arrival. The acting headteacher stands alongside the caretaker beckoning families into school with an encouraging word or two about the pupil's most recent achievements. Pupils' self-esteem and motivation to succeed improve as a result. Parents readily acknowledge that adults in school have a real concern for the care and welfare of their children.
27. The school is aware that the late start to the day does little to discourage sluggish morning routines. As a result, the governors are set to review the times at which school begins and ends. Inspectors agree that this should be done as a matter of priority. The afternoon is too

long and results in more than a few fidgety, tired and hungry pupils who find it difficult to concentrate and to learn. At the pre-inspection meeting, some parents queried whether the quality of the school meals was good enough. Although the meals are adequate with the choice of food much the same as offered in many other primary schools, the meals are neither sufficient, nor designed to keep hunger at bay for an extended afternoon. The availability of food at the breakfast and after school clubs helps ease the situation for children whose day in school begins earlier or ends even later.

28. Much detailed attention has been paid recently to identifying and eliminating health and safety hazards in and around the school. As a result, the school has become a much safer place in which to learn. Good efforts are made, through liaison with parents and health agencies, to ensure that pupils with specific medical needs receive the care they need to take part in all school activities. First aid in school is carried out by a good number of well-trained staff. Pupils with a statement of special educational need receive their full entitlement. In the plans to remodel the premises, due consideration has been given to improving access to the school building for people with physical disabilities.
29. The school cares well for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements. Pupils with special needs are quickly identified and their progress is monitored and supported thoroughly. Assessment is detailed and comprehensive: links with outside agencies are strong. Careful consideration is taken of the needs of all pupils through presenting understandable and practical targets, modifying activities or providing support to meet their needs.
30. All pupils and parents know that bullying, or any form of oppressive behaviour, will not be tolerated by the school. Pupils confirm that they would not hesitate to report any instances of this kind, confident that they would be dealt with in the first instance by whoever they reported them to. Good use is made of class discussion times to value the contribution that diversity in language, religion, race and culture can make to the life of the school. Adults value the diversity within the school and ensure that the needs of pupils speaking English as an additional language are quickly identified and met. The school's child protection procedures are good. Staff are mindful of their responsibilities towards children at risk or any pupil failing to thrive. They listen closely to what children say and are careful to report any concerns they may have at once to the acting headteacher. Detailed records are kept of all incidents with parents properly informed at each stage.
31. Deliberate efforts are made to provide good adult role models in school that pupils can relate to and admire. The hard working and much respected caretaker fits the bill perfectly. He encourages good manners, tidiness and a healthy respect for school rules. Pupils rightly have faith in the adults in school, confident that they will help them over any difficulties they may face. This was evident in lessons when pupils naturally turned to inspectors, or the adult nearest to them, when they were uncertain how to proceed. The feedback teachers give to pupils on their work during lessons is helpful but not always sufficiently focused on helping pupils understand what it is exactly that they need to do to improve it. This is because assessment procedures are not well established in school and teachers do not have all the information they need to give pupils clear academic targets and guidance on how to meet them.
32. There are satisfactory arrangements for children starting school. A good number of parents stay for a while in the nursery or reception class to settle their children at the start of the day. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting had no concerns about the way their children were introduced to the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with parents; it has made good, purposeful links with the community and satisfactory links with colleges and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are impressed by the recent improvements in school and are keen for these to continue.
- Good links with the community enhance the curriculum and strengthen the expertise of the staff.
- The school has established a friendly and open dialogue with parents but their views are not sought in any formal way.
- Reporting to parents on pupils' achievements is satisfactory but no governors' report was published this year.

Commentary

33. In a period of uncertainty, the school has made good, and sustained, efforts to communicate as openly as it can with parents and in so doing has successfully retained their loyalty. This has inspired parents' confidence in the school at a time when it has proved difficult to appoint a team of permanent staff. Parents appreciate the commitment all staff have shown towards helping pupils achieve. At the pre-inspection meeting they felt moved to comment on how hard the teachers work. Parents view Queensbridge as a rapidly improving school where pupils are happy and secure. Inspectors agree.
34. Co-operation between home and school is good. Parents have no hesitation in approaching staff on any matter concerning their child, confident that they will receive a courteous and helpful response. Parents appreciate the improvements in the standard of behaviour in school, and see it reflected in their children's conduct at home. Eager to encourage more parental involvement, the governors have gathered together a group of parents who are interested in fund-raising. The 15 who attended the two introductory meetings provided strong representation from the local African-Caribbean community. All had useful ideas about how the partnership between home and school might be improved further. However, the school has yet to find ways of taking into account the views of all parents in a more formalised way.
35. Parents are regularly involved in discussions with the class teachers where children have special educational needs and are kept fully informed of the support that their children are receiving. They are invited to termly reviews of the targets set in pupils' individual education plans.
36. Parents have no concerns about the way the school communicates with them but are not always satisfied by what they are told. Their qualms about the future development of the school has led to their wanting more information about the school's leadership than can currently be provided. The omission of a governors' report on management issues has not helped ease the desire for such information. Parents are keen to become part of the school's management team. Six parents stood for the recent vacancy for a parent representative on the governing body.
37. Information by way of reports and newsletters is satisfactory. Core documents are translated into the main home languages. Information about the curriculum itself is good. Parents appreciate the written guidance given at the start of the term that includes hints on learning activities to be enjoyed at home. Parents also value homework and want to support it. However, the way the school teaches subjects such as numeracy and handwriting remains somewhat of a mystery to many. This is because parents do not receive the guidance they need to help them put aside the uncertainties they may have about teaching methods that have changed considerably since they themselves were at school.
38. The school seizes on all opportunities to bring in resources and people from the community that will inspire and motivate the staff and the pupils. These include Black Caribbean males, ex professional footballers, who demand the very best of the pupils when coaching them in ball skills. Members of the local church community foster the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through talks in assemblies and church visits. Good use is made of vouchers donated by local sport and entertainment venues to reward pupils who put that little extra effort into their work. Through sound links made with further education colleges, the

school provides curriculum training for student teachers who in turn give general assistance in a number of classes. The school continues to work closely with the Teacher's Centre which has accommodation on the school site. Pupils have started to use the ICT suite housed there, a facility which has not been available to them until recently.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership and management of the acting headteacher are very good, and are key factors in the school's recent and rapid improvement. He is well supported by his deputy headteacher and the new chair of governors, who share his very clear vision for the school. The leadership of other key staff and overall management of the school are good. The governance of the school is satisfactory overall although not all statutory requirements have been met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher has high aspirations and a very clear view of the way forward for the school.
- He has drawn effectively on the support and expertise of The (Hackney) Learning Trust.
- The school is very committed to the inclusion of all pupils in its life and learning opportunities.
- Very good induction procedures and opportunities for professional development are establishing a keen, effective and stable workforce.

Commentary

39. The acting headteacher provides very good leadership and sets a very clear direction for this expanding school. His shared vision for the school is based on all pupils reaching the highest standards they are capable of and providing high quality teaching and support. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher, whose professional role is being developed considerably. The new and experienced chair of governors has a clear understanding of her role and the development of the school. Committees have now been set up on the governing body to oversee, for example, curriculum, staffing, premises and finance, and these have clear terms of reference. The recent omission of the governors' annual report to parents is being rectified in the current year.
40. On the acting headteacher's arrival at the school very little planning was in place for school improvement and immediate attention needed to be given to some matters of health and safety. He has quickly identified key areas for improvement that have enabled the school to immediately set about addressing important and necessary issues. As a result, rapid improvements have been made, for example, in standards of behaviour. Weaknesses in the curriculum and subject provision have been identified and supported, and a staffing structure is emerging that takes good account of the school requirements as it develops further from infant to primary. Planning is already being prepared for longer-term school improvement. A positive ethos for learning has been established. The school successfully includes all groups and the promotion of positive relationships and racial harmony is very good.
41. Considerable emphasis has recently been placed on the recruitment and retention of staff and the establishment of an effective management structure. There has been much instability in staffing at the school, which is now beginning to settle as a supportive and effective team is becoming established. Teachers new to the school are provided with a comprehensive staff handbook, which clearly sets out the procedures and policies in place. This, along with regular morning meetings before school and support from senior staff, provides very good induction. Continuing professional development has helped these teachers and the school to focus on key areas for improvement. The Learning Trust has provided consultant advice and advanced skills teachers, for example, in the Foundation Stage, literacy, mathematics and science, to both monitor the provision and work alongside teachers. This is helping to establish good practice and bring about improvements in these areas, and further adds to the

school's good contribution to teacher training. The Learning Trust has agreed to continue with this support until permanent staff have been appointed. The initiative to use specialist teaching and coaching in physical education provides good role models for both staff and pupils, and is improving provision in the subject. Similarly in music, teacher expertise is enhanced as they work alongside a specialist tutor and this is ensuring that pupils receive good learning experiences. The acting headteacher has also benefited from the support and expertise of a successful local primary headteacher who has very effectively acted as his mentor.

42. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good: the co-ordinator provides good leadership and advice, and is well organised. The teaching staff collaborate well and make effective use of her developing expertise. Statutory requirements are fully met, and the inclusion of all pupils with special educational needs is very good.
43. Financial planning and management are good. Account has been taken of some recent, necessary yet unplanned expenditure, which has improved the site and its safety prior to full renovation. The school has a higher than usual surplus, but this has been set aside to fund a new computer suite, interior decoration and minor improvements as the building is renovated and prepared for the growing school. Expenditure per pupil is near to average; given pupils' satisfactory achievement and the school's current overall effectiveness, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	551,226	Balance from previous year	75,998
Total expenditure	556,358	Balance carried forward to the next	70,866
Expenditure per pupil	3,864		

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Significant improvements have been made over the last couple of months both in the nursery and reception. These have ensured that the quality of provision overall is now satisfactory and that current practice reflects national guidance. A senior manager from the Hackney Trust with much experience in the education of young children has been working in the school for two days a week and his work has been instrumental in bringing about improvements. His very good leadership and management have brought some stability to this area of the school's work during a period of time when several temporary teachers have taught both the nursery and reception class. Prior to these recent changes, evidence indicates that children were only achieving satisfactory. However, in many of the lessons seen, they achieved well.

One of the most significant changes has been the reorganisation of the teaching areas, both inside and out, which now ensure that children have easy access to all areas of learning. Old and inappropriate resources have been thrown away and some new resources purchased. Planning has improved and is now good so that appropriate time is spent on adult led and child initiated activities. Information gained from assessing children is beginning to be used systematically to provide a planned curriculum to ensure good, consistent learning across all areas. Frequent changes of teachers have made the assessment of children difficult but support staff have worked hard during this period to ensure continuity. This is particularly noticeable when children with special educational needs are supported or those with little or no English. The help given to these children is of a good quality and helps them to settle well to their learning. Good support is given to extend their language and ensure that they fully understand what is said to them and what they are expected to do. Staff assess the children's learning on a day-to-day basis through careful observations and use this information to build up an individual profile of learning for each child.

The Foundation Stage curriculum is now satisfactory overall due to the work done in both the nursery and reception. The manager has recognised the need to bring these two areas together and ensure stability of staffing so that the school's work reflects the spirit of the Foundation Stage working as a whole. Teachers and support staff form a good team and use their knowledge of how young children learn to provide activities which stimulate learning in all areas. Much of the teaching was good but staff were still getting to know the children and confirming their expectations in everyday practice. Teaching and learning are now good thanks to these recent improvements, and children are generally achieving well as a result. Because this improvement is only recent, their achievement overall is judged as satisfactory,

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is now good, enabling children to achieve well.
- Most children are on course to meet the expected standard by the time they reach Year 1.
- Good practice is helping to form good links with parents.
- Children are encouraged to develop good behaviour and attitudes to learning.

Commentary

44. Many children enter the nursery with personal and social behaviour which is well below that usually seen for children of this age. Due to good support and teaching, by the end of the reception year children have developed good attitudes to learning and good behaviour which help them to settle to their work. This can be seen in Year 1. However, children in the current reception class have had much disruption to their learning and a significant minority are still

finding it difficult to settle. Good procedures for the start of the school day in the nursery are effective in ensuring children become familiar with the routines and feel confident when their parents and carers leave. In reception, parents are encouraged to stay with their child and become involved in the activity for a short period of time. This helps children to separate from their parents and show them what they can do. Similarly, parents have an opportunity to gain an insight into the school's work and also learn how they might help their child at home. These activities forge good links between home and school. Relationships are good. Children generally respond well to the staff because they are confident that adults will listen to them and treat them fairly. Teachers and support staff remind children of the importance of sharing and taking turns, and provide activities which promote these skills. Many children develop good attitudes to learning because they are interested in what they are doing. They are encouraged to persevere and to complete activities before moving on, and levels of concentration are sometimes good. Although staff work hard to maintain the children's concentration, the school day finishes too late for many children as they feel tired and become restless.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is now generally **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is usually good and this is now helping children to achieve well.
- Children receive good support from the teaching assistants and specialist teacher.
- Some children are not expected to reach the standard expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.
- Letter sounds are taught thoroughly, which gives children a good foundation for developing reading and spelling skills.

Commentary

45. Although many pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and some reach the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1, a significant number are unlikely to reach this standard. This is because they have well below average standards on entry to school and some children are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Staff adopt a good range of strategies in the nursery to encourage the development of the children's oracy and literacy skills but some children do not readily talk with each other unless prompted. In the reception class, the specialist teacher was very effective in encouraging children to respond and speak confidently, for example, when developing their reading skills. Most reception children have the confidence to speak with adults and each other. Children's speaking skills are also systematically developed through the provision of specific activities, such as in the imaginative play areas in nursery and reception. Most children respond well to stories as they are encouraged to listen and put forward their views but a few find it difficult to concentrate for long periods of time. Children benefit from specific sessions when they learn the sounds that letters make and use this knowledge when trying to sound out unfamiliar words. On entry to the nursery, children develop their writing skills by learning how to hold the pencil correctly, recognising and writing their own names and writing messages on the chalkboards outside. This is extended in the reception classes when children write for a variety of purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is now **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and are now helping children to achieve well.
- Some children are likely to reach the standard expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1 but a significant number are not.

Commentary

46. The children's mathematical skills and understanding are taught during specific sessions, and consolidated through daily play activities. In the nursery, children play with numbered cars, thereby developing their number recognition and counting, and group small plastic figures by size and colour. Staff take opportunities to develop learning through, for example, playing with malleable material as they encourage children to remember the shape of the cutters. In the reception class, children have daily numeracy lessons which help to prepare them for work in Year 1. In a good lesson observed, children's counting skills were reinforced and the concepts of 'longer' and 'shorter' developed as the teacher used different lengths of ribbon and playdough to encourage the correct use of the terms. Children later consolidated their learning by making different lengths of dough or by completing a worksheet with objects of different lengths. Whilst most pupils gained from these activities, a few did not fully understand what they were expected to do so learning slowed. More capable children used wooden rods to make shorter and longer lengths and to answer questions such as which colour rod is shorter than the red and longer than the green. Because these activities were interesting, children sustained good levels of concentration and behaved well. Staff worked well with children who experience difficulty with their learning and encouraged them to try hard.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and children are now achieving well.
- Many children in the current reception year are likely to reach the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.
- Good links are made with other areas of learning.
- Little use of information and communication technology was seen.

Commentary

47. It was only possible to observe a limited number of activities during the inspection, but teachers' planning and classroom observations show that children receive a satisfactory range of experiences over time. In the nursery, children have opportunities to develop an understanding of both farm and wild life animals through small world play. Here, their responses are well developed together with their speaking and listening due to good interventions from support staff. Several children were also observed playing with vehicles imagining journeys. Children also develop their understanding of family life through imaginative play in the home corner when they interact by making meals for each other. In a good reception lesson, children achieved well as they developed an understanding of animals that live with humans. Even though the lesson was well prepared and had a range of interesting activities, staff had to work very hard to motivate the children. All activities were well integrated and developed skills in other areas of learning, for example, imaginative play

in the pet shop, the use of small construction kits and charcoal drawings of animals. Whilst the computer was used effectively in this lesson, little other computer work was seen throughout the inspection.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children reach standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.
- The outdoor areas for the children, particularly in the nursery, are much improved due to recent hard work by staff.
- Children develop their physical skills by, for example, playing with small equipment, riding bicycles and having formal physical education sessions.

Commentary

48. Teaching, learning and achievement are good overall. Teachers and support staff in the nursery provide outdoor activities which develop the children's skills well. They become very involved in the children's learning through, for example, playing football and interacting with them to develop play when they ride bikes. They also develop specific skills by demonstrating the use of equipment such as skittles. Children have a satisfactory awareness of space and avoid collisions as they work and use trikes and other wheeled toys. Most children follow instructions well. The area outside also provides good opportunities for children to balance, run and climb. In addition, short sessions provide the children with opportunities to take part in action rhymes and songs. Children in reception have weekly formal lessons which are planned to develop their skills systematically over time and get them used to work in the National Curriculum. Also, activities are provided which encourage children to practise their small motor skills, such as using scissors and construction materials. In the reception classes, many of the daily activities include an element of manual dexterity, for example using scissors and pasting. Adults encourage independence and focus on developing the children's confidence by demonstrating and praising effort.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy their creative work and usually achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good and children are likely to reach the standards set nationally for children of their age at the end of the reception year.
- The use of a specialist music teacher aids the children's learning.

Commentary

49. In the nursery, children are introduced to a good range of activities which helps them to develop their creative skills. They enjoy painting and talk about their work explaining what they have painted and the colours they have chosen. They also like to use the range of resources offered and give reasons for their choice of materials, for example, when making collages. Their work on display such as the self-portraits and masks are of a good quality. It enhances the learning environment and encourages children's self-esteem through the valuing of their work. Children were observed in a good lesson when the specialist teacher developed their confidence in singing and playing musical instruments through a range of activities. Children achieved well and by the end of the lesson gained a greater understanding of pitch and tempo due to the effective teaching and support which developed skills

systematically. In the reception classes, children's creative skills are further developed through focusing on specific artists. One lesson on the work of Mackenzie Thorpes was well planned and contained some good teaching points but the children's learning slowed due to a few getting frustrated at their work and becoming restless. Children dress up and use the imaginative play areas and this encourages their social development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been recent rapid improvements.
- The subject is strongly led and managed.
- In writing, standards are well below average in Year 4 and below average in Year 2; children start school with poorly developed writing and communication skills.
- Further strategies are needed to develop the pupils' speaking skills.
- Assessment and target setting for groups and individuals are underdeveloped.

Commentary

50. Since the last inspection there has been variable improvement when taking account of the difficulties the school has experienced since then but overall improvement is satisfactory. Standards are below average in writing in Year 2 and well below average in Year 4. Pupils do as well as those in similar schools in writing and better in reading. Pupils' learning has been adversely affected by the instability of staff until very recently and the consequent challenging behaviour from some pupils. This has had a marked effect on their achievement over time, which is satisfactory. There have been a large number of staff changes, and there are high numbers of pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs. However, achievement is improving and standards are slowly rising because of the overall good quality of teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic backgrounds and who are learning English as an additional language achieve well when they receive good support in lessons.
51. Currently, standards in speaking are below average in Year 2 and well below in Year 4. Overall, standards are average in listening. Pupils in all the classes observed were generally good listeners but there is a broad range of ability in speaking skills. Questioning is varied sensitively to ensure that all pupils are challenged and supported. Teachers involve pupils well in classroom discussions with, for example, talking partners, so that they become confident that their efforts will be valued. Pupils are often eager to contribute and answer questions. Drama is not being used yet to enhance speaking skills.
52. Standards in reading are below average in Year 2 and Year 4 but are improving because of a greater emphasis on reading through the introduction of a daily guided reading session. Pupils in Year 4 like reading and have a positive attitude to books. More able pupils read with expression and can talk articulately about the events and characters in the story. They explain how to locate books in the library and identify authors, whose books they like reading. Strategies to teach reading are appropriately developed. Consequently all pupils know and can explain how to tackle difficult words.
53. Standards in writing are below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 4. The standard of presentation and handwriting is weak in some classes. Pupils are not consistently learning to join letters when writing. However, there is evidence from the scrutiny of work that the daily handwriting lesson is having a good impact on the pupils' learning, but this is not

being transferred as yet to their recording in other books. More able Year 2 pupils know that sentences need capital letters and full stops. They write simple sentences, for example, to write captions for pictures. There are appropriate opportunities to develop descriptive work and enrich writing in Year 4. One more able pupil wrote, *'People don't understand there are two Lanas, one who constantly dreams and one who talks in a strange tongue...'*

54. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with instances of very good teaching in Year 3. Scrutiny of work confirms at least satisfactory teaching throughout the school when taking account of the many teachers that have been involved in the pupils' learning. In the good lessons observed, the teachers challenged all abilities well and the support teachers and teaching assistants provided good reinforcement to pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. Teachers use time effectively and learning support assistants make a significant contribution to promoting the pupils' learning. Although there is some evidence of satisfactory assessment, there remain some inconsistencies. This is, in part, due to the staff having insufficient time to get together to agree the assessment procedures and moderate their judgements. Pupils' self-assessment is also underdeveloped.
55. The recently appointed subject leader is providing good leadership. She has received effective support from the Learning Trust, which has helped to improve resources and enabled her to fulfil her management role successfully. She recognises many of the weaknesses in teaching and learning and resources and is starting to address these. For example, she has written a policy and introduced a scheme to improve the pupils' handwriting skills. In addition, she has rightly identified the need to improve target setting so that the pupils know what they need to do to improve their writing and reading. However, more needs to be done to raise standards in writing. Also, computers are underused.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. There is limited use of language and literacy in other curriculum areas but some work was evident. For example, Year 4 pupils take notes and prepare sentences to share with the class about Henry VIII's wives, while in music the pupils learn the words of songs from different countries. In science, talking partners effectively support their learning and in religious education, pupils write letters to invite friends to a celebration of Sukkoth.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Monitoring has identified some weaknesses in learning.
- New teachers have quickly settled classes and planned appropriate work.
- A greater emphasis is needed on speaking to develop subject vocabulary and clarify understanding.
- There are some weaknesses in assessment.

Commentary

57. In both Year 2 and Year 4 standards overall are below average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily. A similar picture is shown in the 2004 test results for Year 2, where standards overall were also below average but average in comparison with similar schools. Many changes in staff, and consequent declining behaviour, have until recently affected achievement. Recent improved stability in staffing, along with effective classroom management, is starting to raise the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Subject leadership, strongly supported by The Learning

Trust, has only recently identified and addressed weaknesses in provision that have also lessened achievement.

58. Recent monitoring has identified gaps in pupils' learning, for example in problem solving, shape and data handling. Work was not always sufficiently matched to ability and pupils were often expected to record in too formal a way for their age. Planning for the current term has been amended to take a greater account of these weaknesses. For example, Year 4 pupils have worked well on problem solving and are developing the skills of reading and interpreting questions. Individual progress is starting to be monitored and end-of-year levels have been set for teachers to plan for, and pupils to work towards. However, day-to-day assessment does not yet sufficiently identify the next small steps in pupils' learning, so that greater support and challenge can be provided in order to move all pupils further on in their learning. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils worked well on finding number pairs to a hundred; however, higher attaining pupils quickly used a 100 square to find pairs and could have been further challenged.
59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are generally well planned and prepared, with clear learning objectives, so that a clear focus is maintained throughout lessons and pupils are fully engaged in learning. Planning clearly identifies how support staff are to be used, generally focusing on lower attaining groups, including those with special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language. This support, along with that of the class teacher, helps to ensure that all are fully included in learning. However, more speaking opportunities could be provided by adults in group discussion and questioning, to further develop and assess understanding and to build up a fuller subject vocabulary. The use of computers in lessons to support learning has recently developed. One lesson was seen in the computer suite where pupils were working on a skills program involving ordering numbers to 100. Progress was restricted, however, by the use of mixed ability pairing, which resulted in some lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. The ends of lessons do not always provide sufficient time for pupils to talk about and evaluate their learning, for example by saying what they've found easy or difficult. Also, marking in books does not consistently provide constructive comments on pupils' work. Consequently, without individual targets, pupils themselves are not fully aware of how well they are learning or what they need to do to improve.
60. Overall, leadership of the subject is good and management satisfactory. The co-ordinator for the subject is keen to develop her role, and now has the opportunity and growing expertise to more fully monitor the provision herself, in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning and raise standards and achievement. Similar standards were reported at the last inspection, showing satisfactory improvement since that time.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Pupils are provided with sufficient opportunities to use their skills in other subjects. There are planned opportunities in science where pupils measure, record and compare the results of their investigations. Also, some use is made in history as pupils construct time lines. Insufficient opportunity has been provided in information and communication technology; although programs are being used to improve basic number skills, there is no current evidence of any work on data handling.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvement since the last inspection is good.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Teaching is generally good and this ensures that pupils now make good gains in their learning.

- Although improving, there are some weaknesses in assessment.
- The use of information and communication technology in science is not systematically planned across the school.

Commentary

62. Due to recent rapid improvements in teaching, learning and the curriculum, pupils in most lessons are achieving well, although achievement over time is only satisfactory. Good support is provided for those with special educational needs so they understand what is expected of them and the work is well matched to their capabilities. Those pupils with English as an additional language are also achieving well because unfamiliar words are explained clearly to them and staff demonstrate what they want them to do. Although standards in Year 2 and Year 4 are below average, in Year 2 this shows improvement since the last inspection when they were well below average.
63. Many of the changes have been recent and are a result of good teamwork between the science co-ordinator and a specialist science teacher who spends time in the school each week. Between them they have audited provision, identified weaknesses and made significant improvements. A good scheme of work is in place which ensures that each year group receives appropriate coverage of the national science curriculum. It has also been prepared for pupils as they move into Years 5 and 6. There is recognition of the need to develop assessment practice, for example, to ensure consistency, raise the quality of marking and produce a portfolio of work which covers scientific investigation and enquiry.
64. There is a strong focus on improving attainment and providing a broad and interesting curriculum with an emphasis on investigative science. The latter has been a key feature in pupils' achievement, particularly that of more capable pupils. Pupils respond well to the practical nature of their lessons and are keen to take part. Because they are interested in what they are doing they behave well. No time is lost and consequently, their skills build systematically from one lesson to the next. The youngest pupils are helped to predict what might happen in their investigations, for example in Year 1 when they are asked whether a candle or torchlight would show up best in the dark. As they progress through the school, pupils base their predictions on previously gained scientific knowledge and understanding such as in Year 3 when they are asked which material is most absorbent. By Year 4, they can identify factors to be considered when a fair test is part of the investigation. When speaking with these older pupils correct scientific terminology was used and pupils were confident in what they were saying.
65. Overall, teaching is good. In the best lessons seen, expectations were high and pupils rose well to the challenges set. Teaching was enhanced in Years 3 and 4 by the team teaching approach when the class teacher and specialist teacher planned the work together and shared the teaching. A particular strength of the teaching was the way in which teachers developed questions that encouraged the pupils to think scientifically and explain their ideas. This supported their scientific knowledge and understanding well. For example, in Year 4, pupils developed their understanding of a force and then enhanced their skills by using Newton meters. Whilst there is a need to improve some aspects of assessment, in this lesson the teacher used the final session to encourage pupils to assess their own learning. This good practice resulted in the teachers understanding how successful they had been in their teaching and which aspects might have to be repeated. As for the pupils, it consolidated their learning as well as adding to their confidence and self-esteem when they realised what they had achieved. Although some teachers encourage activities where pupils develop their ICT skills in science, these are not developed systematically at a whole-school level.
66. The school is in a good position to develop science work further as they are raising the profile of the subject and using the expertise from outside the school well. A clear action plan is in place which outlines appropriate issues to be addressed and developed. Key factors in the developing success of this subject will be the continuing good leadership and management and stability of teaching staff.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average.
- Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.
- Recently, the school has moved very quickly to improve provision.
- Teaching and learning are now good.

Commentary

67. By Year 2 and Year 4 standards are well below average. Until recently, a full curriculum was not being taught and resources were inadequate. This has resulted in unsatisfactory achievement due to considerable gaps in pupils' learning. For example, a discussion with Year 4 pupils showed no recollection of data handling and very few opportunities to use and develop word processing skills. They stressed that only in the current term had they had regular access to computers. Until recently, frequent changes in staff and the consequent decline in behaviour have also contributed to low achievement. A lack of any recorded assessment has not enabled teachers to take previous learning into account when planning lessons.
68. The recently appointed acting headteacher and the new subject co-ordinator have quickly identified the need to improve provision. A new computer suite is planned for the growing school and in the meantime arrangements have been made to use the community computer suite in the school building. A full scheme of work is now in place that covers all aspects of the subject and each classroom now has its own computer. Interactive whiteboards have very recently been put into classrooms and staff are receiving training in their use, to support teaching and learning.
69. From the lessons seen, the overall quality of teaching and learning is good. An excellent lesson was seen in Year 1. In this lesson, pupils were identifying keywords to describe objects, as an early introduction to data handling. The planning and preparation for this lesson provided very appropriate activities and support for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. All were fully included and achieved well. Excellent management, with the fullest use of praise and encouragement, built up pupils' confidence.
70. All lessons were well prepared and introduced and showed pupils' eagerness to develop ICT skills. For example, in Year 4, despite a challenging text, pupils quickly mastered cutting and pasting skills as they ordered information on the wives of Henry VIII. Also, Year 2 pupils knew how to work their way through a mathematics' program, selecting options confidently with sound control of the mouse. Good management in lessons is helping pupils to develop better skills of co-operation and sharing as they work in pairs at the computers.
71. Recent developments show that subject co-ordination is developing well. Leadership is good and management satisfactory. The co-ordinator is determined that provision will continue to improve and has set out clear and appropriate targets to achieve this. Developments have, however, yet to be fully monitored so that their impact on standards and achievement can be assessed. Despite recent initiatives, improvement since the last inspection, where standards were average and pupils made satisfactory progress, is unsatisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. With recent improvements in resources, the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is developing satisfactorily. In mathematics, pupils use programs to develop basic skills; in history pupils use the Internet for research and word process their findings.

HUMANITIES

73. Inspectors observed two lessons in history and two in religious education. No geography lessons were seen. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and teachers' planning and spoke with staff and pupils. It was not possible to make overall judgements on provision in history or geography.
74. Curriculum planning shows that the schemes of work for **geography** and history are based on national guidelines. One good and one satisfactory lesson were seen in **history**. In both lessons pupils were expected to use their literacy skills. In the satisfactory lesson in Year 2, not enough account was taken of the range of literacy skills within the class, and therefore the recording task was, despite support being given, too difficult for lower attaining pupils. In the good Year 4 lesson, research packs on the wives of Henry VIII were well prepared. Pupils, working in groups, had to take notes from these and prepare a presentation for the rest of the class. High expectations resulted in good learning.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assemblies make a positive contribution to the pupils' learning.
- Pupils apply what they learn from different world religions to their everyday lives.
- There is no formal assessment system.

Commentary

75. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection but there was insufficient evidence available for a judgement to be made about the quality of teaching and learning across the school. From the two lessons seen and from scrutiny of past work, examination of teachers' planning, discussion with teachers and the co-ordinator, it is clear that there is satisfactory provision that meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus; standards are broadly in line with those expected. This indicates that pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school.
76. Teaching in the lessons observed was good and built well on the pupils' previous experiences. In Year 2, the pupils begin to understand the events that happen at Easter and learn of the traditions such as Easter eggs and hot cross buns that have arisen over the years. In a Year 1 lesson, the pupils learn about forgiveness and saying sorry through the theme of the Holi festival. The teacher effectively linked this to the school's rules and values by identifying and learning from mistakes.
77. A scrutiny of a small amount of pupils' work shows that they are provided with appropriate opportunities to learn about their own and other's faiths. There are suitable links with literacy, geography and art. In Year 4, pupils effectively learn about Hinduism and discuss countries that are special for them. For example, one pupil wrote, *'Bangladesh is special because my granddad was born there.'* And another said, *'Iraq is special because all my family live there and the weather is nice.'* In Year 3, pupils consider 'guidance' and one writes, *'I need guidance when I'm in big trouble.'*

78. The acting headteacher is caretaking the subject and has effectively made an audit and identified the need to purchase resources, to use the local community for visiting speakers and to arrange visits to places of worship. There is no formal assessment procedure which would help to track the pupils' progress over time.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

79. Two lessons were seen in design and technology, one in music and three in physical education. No lessons were observed in **art and design**. Inspectors also spoke to staff and pupils, analysed the school's curriculum provision and looked at pupils' work. It was only possible to make an overall judgement on physical education.
80. In the lessons seen in Years 3 and 4, in **design and technology**, the overall quality of teaching was satisfactory with some good features: pupils enjoyed their work and found the activities interesting. However, standards of pupils' designing and making skills are well below what is expected for the age groups: pupils are not familiar with all the stages of the design process and have had insufficient opportunities to practise their making skills with different tools. There is no evidence of design work that shows the improvement and progression of skills that are specific to the subject.
81. Since the last inspection, the school has made good improvements in **music** provision by adding to the range of musical instruments, developing the programme of work and employing a music specialist. Her skills are used well as she teaches classes and supports during assemblies and performances. As the class teacher is also present during her lessons, they too, benefit from her musical expertise. The acting headteacher identified the need to develop this area and is still in the process of raising the profile of music. For example, at the beginning of the term an African dance and drumming club started which is proving to be very popular. During an assembly, children from this club performed in front of all pupils and staff, showing what significant achievements had been made in such a short time. Pupils were confident and excited about what they could do and their hard work was appreciated and warmly received. The talents of other pupils who play instruments are also demonstrated, thereby showing others what can be achieved by working at home. Also, these performances help to raise the self-esteem of those involved. In assemblies, pupils sing enthusiastically and tunefully, and become fully involved. Music plays a significant role in developing pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator has quickly taken steps to improve provision.
- The use of a specialist teacher and coaches is helping to raise standards.

Commentary

82. In those aspects of the subject where lessons were observed, standards by Year 4 are above average. No teaching was seen in Year 2. Due to the very good quality of teaching and learning provided by a specialist teacher and coaches, pupils are achieving well.
83. The recently appointed acting head teacher is the co-ordinator. He quickly identified that provision for the developing primary school needed to be improved. Many staff changes and a subsequent decline in behaviour had affected achievement. A full scheme of work, based on national guidelines and the use of specialist staff are ensuring very effective teaching and learning and providing good training for teachers.

84. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. An excellent gymnastics lesson seen in Year 1, taken by a specialist teacher, enabled pupils to explore movement and develop simple sequences. The lesson was very well planned and prepared. A good variety of activities helped to keep all pupils engaged throughout. Very good use of demonstration helped pupils to improve their performance. Excellent management ensured that pupils were mostly attentive throughout. They carefully followed instructions, enabling most to make good progress in their learning. This lesson came at the end of the day; the late ending of the school day and the resulting tiredness in some pupils affected their progress.
85. Similar strengths were also very apparent in the very good games lessons taken by coaches in Years 3 and 4. They had very high expectations and fully challenged pupils throughout. Skills were systematically developed so that the standards achieved were above average. The coaches taking these lessons provide excellent role models for pupils, especially boys, and are helping to develop teachers' knowledge of how to deliver very effective lessons.
86. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The new action plan is proving to be effective but has yet to be fully evaluated. Despite recent initiatives, which are not fully embedded, overall improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

87. This area of the school's work was sampled through the observation of three lessons, daily practice and outcomes, and discussions with pupils and staff. Provision is good overall, and links well with the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school meets other requirements by placing due attention on providing sex and relationship education and drugs awareness. All classes cover aspects of development relevant to the age of the pupils during PSHCE lessons. Teachers cover a wide range of subjects and include aspects which are particularly relevant to the pupils.
88. In a good Year 3 lesson about some of the problems people face who can't speak a language fluently, many children admitted to having felt excluded by not being able to speak the dominant language. Due to the high expectations of the teacher and the sensitivity of the pupils a good discussion took place about feeling shy and shocked at not being able to communicate. By the end of the session, due to the teacher's skills, pupils had thought of ways they could help non-English speaking pupils to feel welcome and comfortable in school. Not only did this lesson help individual pupils to understand that what they had felt was quite common, but it also helped to support the school ethos in relation to valuing diversity.
89. Personal and social education is also implicit in all aspects of school life. Pupils talk confidently to adults and know that their ideas are valued. They usually conform cheerfully to school and classroom rules, and are friendly and respectful to their peers, teachers and visitors. Pupils readily take responsibility and develop an understanding of their own role within the school community. This was seen in the way pupils accept a variety of responsibilities in their classrooms, throughout the school, and when acting as monitors during lunchtime and during assemblies. Senior managers are keen to develop this aspect of the school's work further, particularly in relation to citizenship. For example, by organising a school council.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).